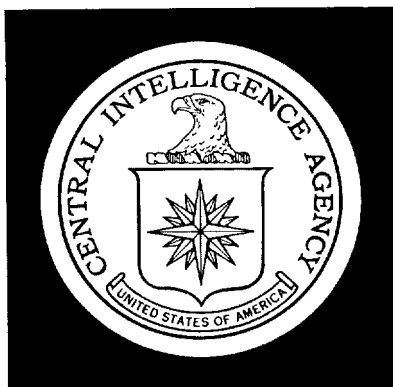


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OFFICE OF
NATIONAL ESTIMATES

MEMORANDUM

Growing Challenges to the Old Guard in Kenya

Secret

27 August 1970

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Approved For Release 2007/03/06 : CIA-RDP79R00967A000200030008-2

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

OFFICE OF NATIONAL ESTIMATES

27 August 1970

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Growing Challenges to the Old Guard in Kenya*

NOTE

This paper assesses certain indications that the men and the system that have dominated Kenya, hitherto one of the most stable African countries, are facing challenges which may sooner or later alter the character of the government significantly.

* This memorandum was prepared by the Office of National Estimates. It was discussed with representatives of the Office of Current Intelligence and the Directorate of Plans, who are in general agreement with its judgments.

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MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Growing Challenges to the Old Guard in Kenya

1. Uneasiness prevails in Nairobi. There are signs of disarray in the Kikuyu political establishment, which has been one of the most durable in black Africa. Certain key ministries are functioning badly. The Kenyan African National Union (KANU), the only legal political party, has become so ineffective that President Kenyatta has called for its reorganization. Tribal grievances are growing, primarily because non-Kikuyu tribes continue to be largely excluded from the main benefits of national independence -- government jobs, ownership of stores formerly run by Asian traders, and farms bought from the British*. Young parliamentarians seem fed up with the partisan

* According to the latest census (1962), Kenya's tribal components were:

Kikuyu	1,640,000	Kamba	930,000
Luo	1,150,000	Kalenjin Group	900,000
Abaluhya	1,090,000	Other Africans	2,655,000

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behavior of the ruling clique. The issue of patronage has also widened the traditional gaps within the Kikuyu, for the tribe's northern clans feel abused by the southern clans that dominate the government. Finally, there are reports of declining morale in the army, mainly because of neglect by the central government.

2. The most remarkable center of discontent is the National Assembly, where criticism of the government has become more vociferous than ever before. In the elections last December, more than 60 percent of the incumbents were thrown out of office, largely because they had spent little time paying attention to local problems of their constituencies. Their replacements, better educated, younger, and more aggressive, have assailed government proposals virtually without letup ever since. The backbenchers have managed to defeat some cherished legislation (including a motion endorsing a one-party state and a bill establishing the death penalty for armed robbery), and their shrill anti-government speeches have reverberated throughout the country. As a group, they are more nationalistic and more radical than the old guard. Favorite targets for the new rhetoric are all foreign interests and the system of patronage that favors the southern Kikuyus.

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3. The absence of effective leadership in the government is largely responsible for this series of outbursts. Kenyatta, old and bothered by a variety of ailments, spends much of his time on his farm and relies more and more on his old colleagues to run the day to day affairs of the country. But no one has stepped in to fill the shoes of Tom Mboya, who ran KANU and the Ministry for Economic Development with great skill until his assassination a year ago. Vice President Moi [] is now subject to criticism even by his own Kalenjin followers. The new speaker of the National Assembly seems overwhelmed by the flood of rhetoric coming from the back benches. A few key cabinet members have been unable to run their shops, []

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4. Much of the discontent finds a spokesman in J.M. Kariuki, the dynamic and controversial Assistant Minister for Tourism and Wildlife. Aggressive, opportunistic, and a highly skilled publicist, Kariuki has a significant public following throughout Kenya, and his influence belies his lowly title. His outspoken attacks on the ruling group

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have made juicy headlines for the Kenyan press and have inspired others to follow his lead. Kariuki derives some support from young Abaluhyas and Luos but depends mostly on his fellow northern Kikuyus, who are fed up with the tight grip of Kenyatta's southern Kikuyus on the machinery of state.

5. Divisions within the Kikuyu, one of black Africa's most dynamic and capable tribes, have been widened by the oath-taking that went on before Mboya's death and increased in its wake. Such oathing -- a chilling reminder of the Mau Mau period -- is the ultimate commitment in Kikuyu society. Its violent character has alarmed all other minority tribes and many Kikuyus as well. Some of the oaths taken last summer called for Kikuyus never to relinquish power. In a few districts, these oaths were forcefully administered, and law and order broke down as local authorities were ordered not to interfere.

6. During the past few months, some of the northern Kikuyus have apparently taken oaths of their own, demanding their fair share of ministerial posts and the expropriation of European and Asian property. There has also been talk of refusing to pay taxes until ex-Mau Maus are given suitable rewards for their past services. [REDACTED]

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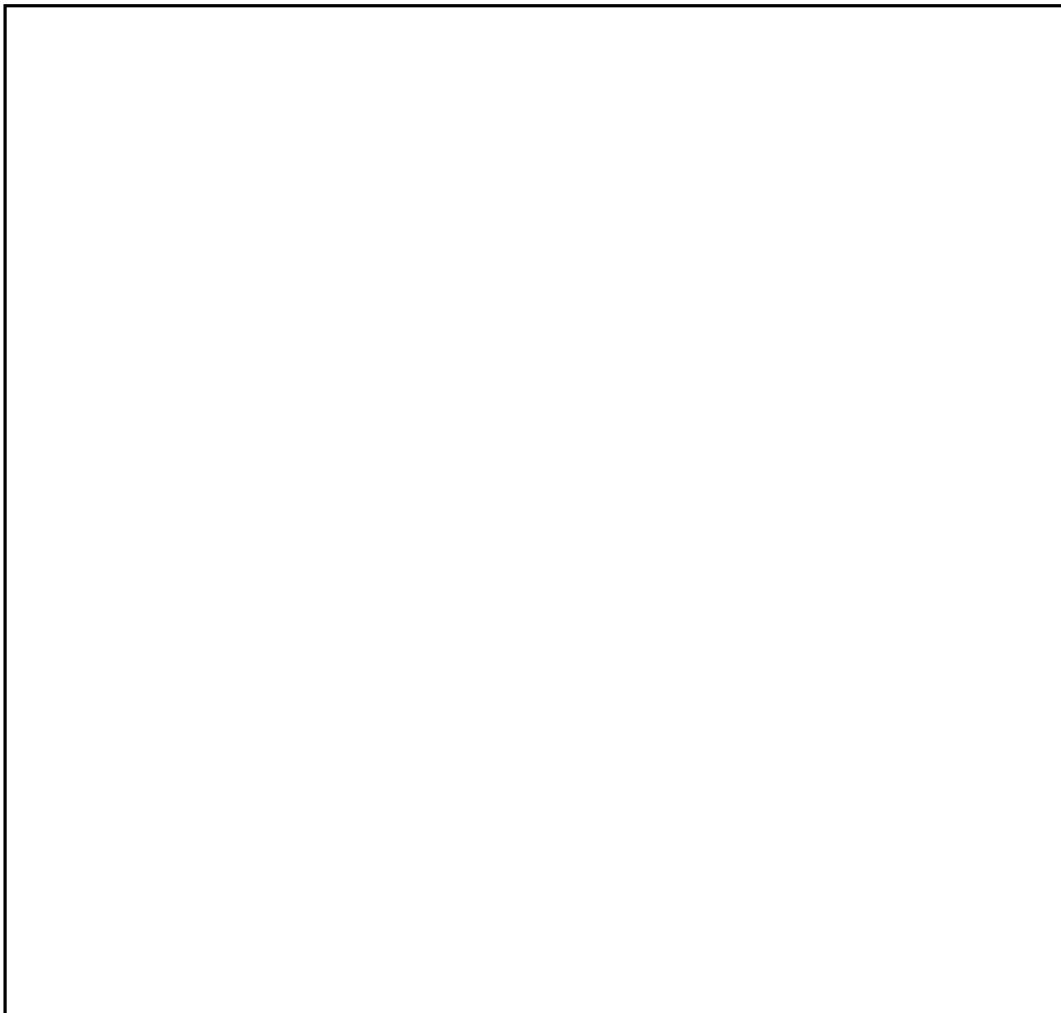
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The

concern of the government leaders indicates how serious the
Kikuyu rift has become.

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8. Kenyatta, of course, still has a lot going for him. His reputation has been sullied by his partisan tribal behavior in the last year, but he commands vast respect and power as father of his country. Moreover, he rides herd over a reasonably effective police and security apparatus acutely sensitive to anti-regime activities and has never been reluctant to move ruthlessly against those considered a threat to his control.

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9. Kenyatta's retainers lack their chief's skill and popular appeal. Without him around to back them up, they would probably be unable to retain control. Northern Kikuyus and leaders of other tribes are in no mood to tolerate another government completely dominated by southern Kikuyus. Kenya has a tradition of relatively free and open politics,

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almost unique in black Africa. The press is generally unrestrained, and the voting public seems fairly sophisticated politically. Moreover, the parliamentary system permits the free exchange of views. This atmosphere gives advantages to the articulate, educated newcomers

as well as its receptivity to western interests and presence.

10. Even if the old guard manages to hold on, there will probably be some changes in Kenyan policy.

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Kenyan government will find it difficult to avoid taking some kind of anti-British action -- either unilaterally or in conjunction with Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

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11. If the current ruling clique loses power, any conceivable successor government would be considerably more xenophobic. The present government has expelled thousands of Asian traders, but at a measured pace. A less conservative regime would move much faster. The 600-800 white farmers would also be hard-pressed to stay in place, and ministries would probably be stripped of their expatriate advisors. A Kenyan government dominated by the present backbenchers would take on the nationalistic coloration of the regimes in Uganda, Tanzania, and Zambia. Foreign policy pronouncements would be of a more "non-aligned" nature, with the consequent improvement of the heretofore limited Soviet position. Nationalizations would be widespread, and foreign investment made more difficult and less profitable. The US, like other western nations, would find such a regime less friendly than its predecessor.

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